
**STATE OF ALASKA
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMISSION
ON FEDERAL AREAS**

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



STATE OF ALASKA

CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMISSION ON FEDERAL AREAS

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Dear Reader:

This is the 2008 Annual Report of the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas to the Governor and the Alaska State Legislature. The annual report is required by AS 41.37.220(f).

INTRODUCTION

The Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas was originally established by the State of Alaska in 1981 to provide assistance to the citizens of Alaska affected by the management of federal lands within the state. In 2007 the Alaska State Legislature reestablished the Commission. 2008 marked the first year of operation for the Commission since funding was eliminated in 1999.

Following the 1980 passage of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), the Alaska Legislature identified the need for an organization that could provide assistance to Alaska's citizens affected by that legislation. ANILCA placed approximately 104 million acres of federal public lands in Alaska into conservation system units. This, combined with existing units, created a system of national parks, national preserves, national monuments, national wildlife refuges and national forests in the state encompassing more than 150 million acres. The resulting changes in land status fundamentally altered many Alaskans' traditional uses of these federal lands.

In the 28 years since the passage of ANILCA, changes have continued. The Federal Subsistence Board rather than the State of Alaska has assumed primary responsibility for regulating subsistence hunting and fishing activities on federal lands. Federal agencies now assign hunting guide use areas within national preserves, national wildlife refuges and national forest areas, where previously this was the responsibility of the State Guide Board. Only a few commercial fishermen still ply the waters of Glacier Bay. Mining activity in conservation system units has ceased. Timber harvest in the Tongass National Forest has fallen well below the target levels in ANILCA due to a combination of market factors,

designation of additional wilderness and changes to management prescriptions. In 2008 the State of Alaska sold more timber from state owned lands in southeastern Alaska than the Forest Service sold from the Tongass.

During this same period, opportunities for tourism and recreation based businesses on Federal lands have expanded. ANILCA programs such as the Section 1308 local hire program has provided hundreds of jobs, particularly in the rural areas of the state. Other provisions which grant a preference for providing visitor services within conservation system units have also provided jobs and economic opportunities for Alaskans.

Management plans, policies and regulations for all of these units have been in place for years. Most of those have undergone or are scheduled for review and modification. This process will likely trigger change in management direction and additional plans. The federal land management agencies have developed solid programs for public involvement and consultation in the planning and regulatory process. But the process can be intimidating for the general public. This is where the Commission can be most effective in providing assistance to the public in both understanding the process and participating in the development of management plans and regulations.

The State's ANILCA program has developed an efficient and effective working relationship with the federal agencies. However, the focus of that program is primarily on state agency participation in the implementation of ANILCA and protection of the State's interests. The relationship between the Commission and the State ANILCA program is cooperative. Our work is complementary, but not duplicative. Regular consultation between the Commission and the ANILCA Program benefits the State and its citizens.

A generation of Alaskans has grown up with the national parks and preserves, national wildlife refuges, wild and scenic rivers and wilderness areas created by this statute. Much of the acrimony that surrounded its passage has faded. In spite of the progress, problems and conflicts on federal public lands remain.

ANILCA is not fixed in stone. It has been amended more than 30 times. Pressures to dilute or eliminate its special provisions for access, harvest of fish and game, cabin use and construction, commercial fishing and fisheries enhancement, and other resource use are constant. Agencies regularly revise policies and regulations governing public uses and activities within conservation system units and on other federal lands. In recent years restrictions and permit requirements for recreational uses within some units have been implemented. Conflicts between user groups occur in a growing number of areas. The primary

goal of this Commission is to ensure that Alaskans' traditional uses of the public lands are not eroded and conflicts are minimized.

DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION

The duties and responsibilities of the Commission are contained in AS 41.37.220:

- (a) The commission shall consider, research and hold hearings on the consistency with federal law and congressional intent on management, operation, planning, development and additions to federal management areas in the state.
- (b) The commission shall consider, research and hold hearings on the effect of federal regulations and federal management decisions on the people of the state.
- (c) The commission may, after consideration of the public policy concerns under (a) and (b) of this section, make a recommendation on the concerns identified under (a) and (b) of this section to an agency of the state or to the agency of the United States which manages federal land in the state.
- (d) The commission shall consider the views, research, and reports of advisory groups established by it under AS 41.37.230 as well as the views, research, and reports of individuals and other groups in the state.
- (e) The commission shall establish internal procedures for the management of the responsibilities granted to it under this chapter.
- (f) The commission shall report annually to the governor and the legislature within the first 10 days of a regular legislative session.
- (g) The commission shall cooperate with each department or agency of the state or with a state board or commission in the fulfillment of its duties.

The Commission may establish advisory groups. Members of an advisory group must be broadly representative of individuals involved in activities affected by the establishment or management of units of federal land within the state.

Although the Commission's role is advisory, it is authorized by AS 41.37.240 to request the attorney general to file suit against a federal official or agency if the Commission determines that the federal agency or official is "acting in violation of an Act of Congress, congressional intent, or the best interests of the State of Alaska."

COMPOSITION

The Commission is composed of twelve members, six appointed by the Governor and six appointed by the Legislature. Commission officers for 2008 were: Chairman, Mr. Rick Schikora (Fairbanks) and Vice-Chairman, Mr. Rick Halford (Chugiak). The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Mr. Rod Arno (Wasilla) and Mr. Charlie Lean (Nome) comprise the Commission's Executive Committee. A full list of the members for 2008 is included at the end of this document.

STAFF

There is currently one staff position for the Commission: an Executive Director, Stan Leaphart, who directed the Commission prior to its hiatus. The Commission is in the process of hiring another staff person to assist with the work of the Commission. The office is located in the Department of Natural Resources Northern Regional Office, 3700 Airport Way, Fairbanks, AK 99709-4699. (907) 374-3737. FAX 451-2751.

2008 COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

The first Commission appointments were made by Governor Sarah Palin, Senate President Lyda Green and Speaker of the House John Harris in October 2007. The Commission met for the first time in February, 2008 in Juneau. The meeting dealt primarily with organizational and administrative matters, including the election of officers. Members also were briefed on the history of Federal land ownership in Alaska and provided with background information on pre-statehood land withdrawals, the Alaska Statehood Act, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and ANILCA. The key provisions of ANILCA were reviewed, with a

special focus on access to conservation system units, and the structure and responsibilities of the various Federal land management agencies. State agency representatives provided an overview of the current State ANILCA program and the State's involvement with the ongoing implementation of that statute.

On June 5, 2008 the Commission held its second meeting in Fairbanks. Commission members were given an overview of the State Ethics Act and its application to boards and commissions. The Commission also had the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues, such as proposed federal legislation, agency management plans, public involvement, cabin policies, and predator management with Hans Niedig, Special Assistant for Alaska to the Secretary of the Interior. Members were also briefed on Revised Statute 2477 Rights-of-Way and ANCSA Section 17(b) easements.

In July, following the hiring of an Executive Director, the Commission opened its office and began operations. Contacts were made with each of the federal agency regional or state offices, as well as each individual park, refuge, and ranger district offices to ensure that the Commission kept abreast of agency activities. More importantly, work was also directed at establishing contacts between the Commission and organizations, user groups and the general public.

The Commission had its third meeting of 2008 on November 6 and 7 in Anchorage. At that meeting Commission by-laws and internal guidelines were adopted. Other agenda items included an overview of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service revision program for the comprehensive conservation plans for the national wildlife refuges in Alaska. The Commission also discussed off-road vehicle use in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, public use cabins and wilderness management issues in the Tongass National Forest and the ANILCA Section 1308 Local Hire Program. The Commission also took testimony from the public on matters related to navigability and federal management conflicts on state owned waters, access, Tongass public use cabins, wilderness management issues and off road vehicle use.

REGULATORY, PLANNING AND POLICY ISSUES

Following is an overview of the major issues that the Commission worked on during 2008. The full text of the comments and correspondence can be found on the Commission's website at <http://dnr.alaska.gov/commis/cacfa/>. Copies of all comments or correspondence can also be obtained through the Commission's office.

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

The Commission submitted comments to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the Draft Revised Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). One of the ongoing management issues for all of the conservation system units in Alaska is access. In the case of the Kenai Refuge, restrictions on aircraft access to lakes located within designated wilderness have been a major issue for over 20 years.

Aircraft regulations for the refuge were originally promulgated in 1986 primarily to protect nesting and brooding trumpeter swans. At that time it was estimated that only about 30 pair of swans nested on the refuge. The 1985 plan established a management objective of 40 pairs of nesting swans on the refuge. Currently 50 to 60 pairs are now nesting on the refuge. The Commission pointed out that clearly the 1985 management objective for swans has been surpassed. The Commission also questioned discrepancies between numbers and distribution of swan pairs stated in the draft plan and a recent published survey of the swan population on the Kenai.

The Commission's review of the information in the EIS regarding potential environmental consequences of opening additional lakes to aircraft access indicated an increased but acceptable level of impacts. The Commission concluded that opening additional lakes was consistent with the statutory purpose of providing opportunities for fish and wildlife oriented recreation, and would remain compatible with other refuge purposes. The FWS was encouraged to modify the preferred alternative to allow an increase in the number of wilderness lakes open to aircraft access. The Commission also encouraged the FWS to reconsider its decision not to conduct studies on the impacts of aircraft access on swans.

On a related access issue, the Commission supported the proposed expansion of the area in the Chickaloon Flats open to wheeled aircraft access and to allow floatplane access to the lower 6.5 miles of the Chickaloon River. We also supported continued use of the Big Indian Creek airstrip, but suggested that the preferred alternative be modified to provide regular maintenance for this airstrip. Should regular maintenance not be provided, volunteer maintenance should be allowed to continue.

Given the importance of aircraft access to refuge visitors and the potential for impacts to refuge resources, the Commission asked the FWS to conduct the necessary studies or surveys to accurately determine the current level of aircraft use on the refuge. These studies should also take an objective look at current

trends and patterns in aircraft use for the region and make realistic projections for future aircraft use on the Kenai NWR.

For snowmachine use on the refuge, the Commission suggested adoption of a management strategy direction that would allow additional flexibility for managing snowmachine use. We also supported a proposal to create zones within designated use areas that could be opened or closed independently based on local snow conditions, rather than opening or closing the entire refuge. This approach would give refuge managers greater flexibility in responding to public use demands. And finally, the Commission strongly supported the proposal to conduct studies with stakeholders as a means to evaluate the effects of snowmachine use on refuge resources and to form the basis of future management decisions.

The refuge plan proposed allowing the level of non-guided public use on the Middle Kenai River to continue without restrictions pending completion of a Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) planning process. The Commission recommended that the final plan contain a section outlining the key elements of the LAC process and explaining how various organizations, user groups and the general public can participate in the process.

Finally, the Commission encouraged the FWS to continue to provide the public with the opportunity to participate fully in the development or revision of the step-down plans for the Kenai NWR. These step-down plans will actually implement the management provisions found in the CCP. The Commission will continue to work with the public and the FWS as these plans progress toward completion.

Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan

The Commission provided scoping comments to the Bureau of Land Management for the Eastern Interior Planning Area Resource Management Plan (RMP). This planning area includes 8 million acres of BLM managed land, including the Steese National Conservation Area (NCA), White Mountains National Recreation Area (NRA), Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River, Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River and the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River.

The Commission stressed that the RMP must fully incorporate and comply with those provisions of ANILCA which provide management and planning direction for each of the designated areas. ANILCA specifies the purposes for each area and also incorporates and amends provisions of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

The existing Record of Decision (ROD) for the Steese NCA allowed mineral location, oil and gas leasing, geothermal leasing and leasing of non-energy minerals within certain management units. The 1986 ROD for the White Mountain NRA allowed for the removal of leasable and non-leasable minerals in some management units. Regulations to allow leasing of hard rock minerals also were adopted. While these actions were never fully implemented, it was recommended that any decision to change that management direction be fully addressed in the RMP and associated EIS.

The Commission pointed out that access must be a key component of the RMP. Title XI of ANILCA and the regulations at 43 CFR Part 36 provide a mechanism for the development of transportation and utility systems in or across conservation system units, including the 3 wild and scenic rivers within the planning area, as well as the Steese NCA and the White Mountain NRA. Title XI also allows the use of snowmachines, motorboats, airplanes and non-motorized surface transportation methods for traditional activities and for travel to and from villages and homesites.

For the Steese NCA, White Mountains NRA, Birch Creek, Beaver Creek and the Fortymile River, the Commission suggested that the revised RMP/EIS address current types and levels of access for recreation and other purposes. Any existing access restrictions or closures should be reassessed to determine if they are still needed for resource protection or management purposes. Any decision to implement additional restrictions on access or closure of an area can only be implemented through the process outlined in the Title XI regulations which requires notice and hearing, and a determination that such use is detrimental to the resource values of the unit or area.

ANILCA Section 811(b) provides that the Secretary of the Interior "shall permit on the public lands appropriate use for subsistence purposes of snowmobiles, motorboats, and other means of surface transportation traditionally employed for such purposes by local residents, subject to reasonable regulation." Because this section applies to all federal public lands in Alaska where subsistence activities are permitted, the RMP/EIS should address this use and how the "reasonable regulation" standard will be applied.

ANILCA Section 1323(b) states: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, and subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary of the Interior may prescribe, the Secretary shall provide such access to non-federally owned land surrounded by public lands managed by the Secretary under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 USC 1701-82) as the Secretary deems adequate to secure to the owner the reasonable use and enjoyment thereof: *Provided*, That such owner comply with rules and regulations applicable to access

across public lands.” This guarantee of access is similar to that found in Section 1110(b) for conservation system units, but applies to all BLM managed lands in Alaska. The RMP/EIS should address this provision as it applies to future access needs for State lands, Native Corporation, and other private lands within the planning area.

The original Resource Management Plans for the Steese NCA and the White Mountains NRA allow a wide array of recreational opportunities, both motorized and non-motorized. According to the September 2005 Scoping Report for the White Mountains NRA RMP amendment, one of the reasons for revising the RMP was the need to revisit the management of off-highway vehicles (OHV). The Notice of Intent to prepare the RMP/EIS also lists off-highway vehicle use as a major issue or management concern that will be addressed in the plan.

The BLM should consult closely with all user groups in identifying the need to make changes to the designated OHV use areas. User groups should also be consulted in developing and implementing a monitoring program and establishing threshold standards that would trigger closures or use restrictions.

The Commission also outlined potential conflicts between the administratively created National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) and the statutory provisions of ANILCA for the Steese NCA, the White Mountains NRA, Birch Creek WSR, Beaver Creek WSR and the Fortymile WSR. Each of these ANILCA units are also included in the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). For additional detail on the Commission's concerns on the potential effects of the NLCS see the discussion under the section on federal legislation.

BLM Emergency Withdrawal Regulations

The Commission reviewed a proposal to revise regulations providing for emergency land withdrawals under the Federal Land Management Policy Act (FLPMA). The Commission supported the Bureau of Land Management determination that the existing regulations are redundant and that public lands can be adequately protected through conventional withdrawal procedures. That support was based upon the fact that the existing regulations do not allow the public to participate in the emergency withdrawal process. The Commission does not support any process that excludes public participation.

Any executive branch action which withdraws more than 5,000 acres in Alaska is subject to the provisions of ANILCA Section 1326. This section and the regulations at 43 CFR §2300.0-3(a)(5) require publication in the *Federal Register* and notification to both Houses of Congress before any such withdrawal becomes

effective. The withdrawal terminates unless Congress passes a joint resolution of approval within one year of notice of the withdrawal.

Withdrawals of less than 5,000 acres in Alaska are still subject to the provisions of FLPMA Section 204(d) which require public notice and opportunity for public hearing and comment. Under the existing regulations, Section 204(e) emergency withdrawals do not require prior public notice, nor is the public provided any opportunity for hearing and comment. Any proposal to withdraw public lands for any purpose, regardless of the acreage involved, must provide the public with the opportunity for review and comment.

ANILCA Section 1308 Local Hire Program

Section 1308 of ANILCA allows federal land management agencies to hire local residents based upon their specialized knowledge or expertise. This program has provided important employment opportunities throughout Alaska for more than 27 years. A recent change to the program, imposed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has caused serious concern for its future.

The change requires the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture to utilize a competitive hiring process for filling jobs under the local hire program. Until recently, federal land management agencies in Alaska have been able to hire local residents with special knowledge or expertise into the excepted service rather than into the competitive service. In a letter to OPM, the Commission pointed out that the change is inconsistent with both the language and intent of the statute and if allowed to stand will result in the loss of job opportunities in areas of the state where such opportunities are already limited.

ANILCA Section 1308 was intended to avoid precisely the types of hiring requirements and restrictions imposed by OPM. In creating the program in 1980, Congress recognized that local residents often have special knowledge or expertise that can benefit an agency in its management responsibilities for the lands and resources within a conservation system unit.

Congress also recognized that existing civil service laws and regulations would likely prevent agencies from utilizing this local knowledge base because local Alaskan residents would have difficulty competing with applicants throughout the country. Consequently, Section 1308 directed the Secretaries to establish a program under which any local individual having special knowledge or expertise could be hired without regard to many of the requirements in the federal civil service laws or regulations.

Over the years Congress has made changes to Section 1308 to authorize a veterans' preference for local hires; expanded application of the program beyond conservation system units to all federal public lands in Alaska; directed the Secretary of the Interior to report on how the recruitment process may restrict local hire employees from successfully obtaining positions in the competitive service; and authorized a National Park Service pilot program to employ local residents at four park units in northwestern Alaska.

This pilot program resulted in the hiring of four local residents into career positions, promoted or upgraded four existing local hire employees, established three additional seasonal ranger/liaison positions in villages and hired a special assistant for Native issues. All of the new, as well as the upgraded employees, were hired under the existing local hire program and are in the excepted service.

There are currently more than 200 Alaskan residents employed by federal agencies through the local hire program. Seasonally, these agencies hire an additional 250 local residents. Both the permanent positions and the seasonal jobs represent important employment opportunities for Alaskans. In some villages, jobs under this program may be the only ones available.

The ANILCA 1308 Local Hire Program has worked well since it began in 1981. The recent directive by OPM requiring recruitment under formal competitive procedures will severely hinder this important program. The Commission strongly encouraged OPM to reconsider its position and work with the responsible federal agencies in Alaska to ensure this program continues to benefit Alaskans and the federal public lands in this state.

At the time of this report additional statutory changes have been proposed to the Local Hire Program. These changes have been approved by the U.S. Senate and approval by the House of Representatives is expected. These changes would redesignate any existing permanent position and the person serving in it under the local hire program as having been part of the competitive service from date of hire. Past local hire employees may also have their employment time redesignated as being in the competitive service. The Commission supports these changes.

ANCSA 17(b) Easements

Several members of the public have contacted the Commission expressing concerns about Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) land conveyances and 17(b) easements. Section 17(b) of the ANCSA provides authority for the reservation of easements across lands conveyed to village and regional Native corporations. The easements are rights reserved to the United States and are reserved to allow the public to cross private property to reach public lands and

major waterways. They take the form of 60-foot wide roads, 25- and 50-foot trails, and one-acre sites for short-term uses. These rights are reserved at the time the lands are conveyed.

ANCSA land selections are being finalized to meet the requirements of the Alaska Land Transfer Acceleration Act. The BLM and the State are working to identify and reserve 17(b) easements as lands are conveyed to the village and regional corporations. Opportunities for public involvement are provided, however the general public is not always familiar with the process, which can be confusing. Commission staff has worked with a number of individuals to provide them with information about the conveyance and nomination processes and to put them into contact with the BLM and the State Public Access and Defense Unit to help identify specific easement nominations.

Federal Legislation

National Landscape Conservation System

The Commission reviewed the provisions of S. 3213, entitled the *Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2008*. This bill proposed establishing in statute the current administrative structure of the Bureau of Land Management's National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). The Commission conveyed to the State's Congressional delegation serious concerns with the proposal to grant statutory recognition to what many consider a duplicative and unnecessary program.

The NLCS was created administratively by former Secretary of the Interior Babbitt to give the Bureau of Land Management greater public recognition and a more visible management presence. The intent was to create a high profile program that would represent a new BLM that would manage a system of specially protected and managed conservation units.

In Alaska, the NLCS includes the Steese National Conservation Area, the White Mountains National Recreation Area, 6 designated wild and scenic rivers, 418 miles of the Iditarod Trail and a 784,000 acre wilderness study area. The Steese NCA and the White Mountains NRA, and the six wild and scenic rivers, Birch Creek, Beaver Creek, Fortymile River, Gulkana River, Delta River and the Unalakleet River were created by ANILCA.

ANILCA contains specific purposes and management direction for each of these areas. The Commission pointed out that, by creating another layer of purposes, policies and guidelines for management, NLCS designation may create conflicts between the ANILCA mandates and those of the NLCS.

The Commission has concerns regarding the potential effect of NLCS designation on upcoming revisions to the Resource Management Plans for the Steese National Conservation Area and the White Mountains National Recreation Area.

Consistent with ANILCA, the existing plans for both areas allow a wide range of multiple use, including hunting, fishing, motorized and non-motorized recreation and access. The plans also allow limited mineral entry and leasing and oil and gas leasing. When implemented, the stated purposes of the NLCS do not appear to support the multiple use approach to management of these two areas as envisioned by ANILCA. Consequently, designation of these area may affect the planning process and restrict or eliminate many of the currently allowed uses.

The present NLCS budget is approximately \$50 million a year. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that other bills proposing to establish the NLCS would have no effect on the BLM budget because the agency already has permanent authority to manage lands in the system, subject to annual appropriations. However, at a budget hearing in early 2008 , the BLM stated that some \$19.3 million in base funding would be permanently redirected from other programs that currently fund the NLCS units. The Commission maintains that these funds could better be spent for local management of BLM areas, rather than funding an office of policy makers in Washington, D.C.

S. 3213 failed to pass during 2008. However, it was reintroduced in early January 2009 as S. 22 the ***Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009***. This is the same bill referenced above that proposes changes to the ANILCA 1308 local hire program. It passed the U.S. Senate on January 15, 2009. Passage by the House of Representatives is expected.

While the Commission does not support statutory authorization of the NLCS, it is important to note that the Omnibus Bill contains language that addresses some of our concerns with previous proposals. Section 2002(d) states that nothing in that section “enhances, diminishes or modifies any law or proclamation (including regulations relating to the law or proclamation) under which the components of the NLCS were established or managed,” including ANILCA.

The Commission will continue to monitor the development of the NLCS program and the Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan to ensure that NLCS policies do not supersede any of the provisions of ANILCA in the management of the Alaskan components.

Current Federal Agency Activities

The Commission is currently working on or tracking the following:

Denali Park Road Vehicle Management Plan
Nabesna Area Off-Road Vehicle Use – Environmental Impact Statement
Selawik National Wildlife Refuge Revised Comprehensive Conservation Plan
Access and Travel Management Plan – Hoonah Ranger District
Access and Travel Management Plan – Admiralty National Monument & Juneau
Ranger District
Recreation Planning Project- Ketchikan-Misty Fiords Ranger District
Eastern Interior Resource Management Plan
Delta National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan

During 2009, the Commission will increase its public outreach efforts by contacting additional user groups and organizations to provide information about ongoing federal land management issues and activities and to solicit input. The Commission will also continue to develop its working relationships with federal agencies and to ensure that those relationships remain productive as the transition to a new federal administration in Washington D.C. is completed. The Commission will monitor closely any changes in policy and management direction that could affect Alaskans' rights and guarantees under ANILCA and other federal statutes.

CONCLUSION

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act passed in December 1980. In the intervening 28 years the level of federal land management planning, along with regulation and policy development has continued unabated. The impacts to the citizens of Alaska and their uses of the federal public lands have been wide ranging. The level of planning and regulatory activity by federal agencies will likely increase in the foreseeable future. Federal agencies are in the process of reviewing and revising the original ANILCA mandated plans for national park and wildlife refuge units. Preparation or revision of numerous unit specific "step-down" plans are scheduled. For example, the Draft Revised Kenai National Wildlife Refuge CCP identifies 15 current step-down plans for the refuge. Five of these plans are scheduled for revision in the next 2 to 3 years. Development of nine new step-down plans are scheduled within the next 5 years.

In the coming year, the Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas will continue to work with the public and other state and federal agencies to ensure opportunities for public involvement in all aspects of management of federal public

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lands within the state. The Commission is fully committed to its efforts to protect customary and traditional uses of those lands throughout Alaska.

The Commission recognizes that as competition for public resources increases, cooperation and understanding between user groups will be critical to successful management of these areas. At the same time, federal land management agencies must continue to recognize and expand the role of the public in their planning and regulatory efforts. More importantly, those agencies must always fully consider the effects of their decisions on the citizens of Alaska. This Commission will work toward these goals as it meets its statutory responsibilities during 2009.

Submitted: January 29, 2009
Citizens' Advisory Commission on Federal Areas
Rick Schikora, Chairman

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*Resigned 11/08

Conservation System Units and Federally Designated Areas in Alaska

National Park Service

Park Unit	Size in Acres	Wilderness Acreage
Aniakchak National Monument & Preserve	514,000	0
Bering Land Bridge National Preserve	2,457,000	0
Cape Krusenstern National Monument	560,000	0
Denali National Park & Preserve	6,028,200	2,124,783
Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve	7,592,000	7,167,192
Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve	3,283,000	2,664,876
Katmai National Park & Preserve	4,268,000	3,384,358
Kenai Fjords National Park	567,000	0
Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park	113	0
Kobuk Valley National Park	1,710,000	174,545
Lake Clark National Park & Preserve	3,363,000	2,619,550
Noatak National Preserve	6,700,000	5,765,427
Sitka National Historical Park	113	0
Wrangell-Saint Elias National Park & Preserve	12,318,000	9,078,675
Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve	1,713,000	0
Alagnak Wild and Scenic River	30,665	0
Aleutian World War II National Historical Area	134	0
Total	51,104,225	32,979,406

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Wildlife Refuge	Size in Acres	Wilderness Acreage
Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge	3,417,756	2,576,320
Alaska Peninsula National Wildlife Refuge	3,563,329	0
Arctic National Wildlife Refuge	19,286,242	8,000,000
Becharof National Wildlife Refuge	1,200,060	400,000
Innoko National Wildlife Refuge	3,850,321	1,240,000
Izembek National Wildlife Refuge	311,075	307,981
Kanuti National Wildlife Refuge	1,430,160	0
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge	1,912,425	1,354,247
Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge	1,980,270	0
Koyukuk National Wildlife Refuge	3,550,080	400,000
Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge	1,560,000	0
Selawik National Wildlife Refuge	2,150,161	240,000
Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge	700,058	0
Togiak National Wildlife Refuge	4,100,857	2,272,746
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge	19,162,296	1,900,000
Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge	8,632,224	0
Total	76,807,314	18,691,294

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U.S. Forest Service

National Forest	Size in Acres	Wilderness Acreage
Tongass National Forest	16,773,804	5,753,548
Chugach National Forest	5,491,580	0
Total	22,265,384	5,753,548

National Forest Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas	Size in Acres
Kootznoowoo Wilderness (Admiralty Is. Nat. Monument)	956,255
Misty Fjords Wilderness (Misty Fjords Nat. Monument)	2,142,442
Coronation Island Wilderness	19,232
Chuck River Wilderness	74,298
Endicott River Wilderness	98,729
Karta River Wilderness	39,889
Kuiu Wilderness	60,581
Maurille Islands Wilderness	4,937
Petersburg Creek-Duncan Salt Chuck Wilderness	46,849
Pleasant/Lemusurier/Inian Islands Wilderness	23,096
Russell Fjord Wilderness	348,701
South Baranof Wilderness	319,568
South Etolin Wilderness	82,619
South Prince of Wales Wilderness	90,968
Stikine-LeConte Wilderness	448,926
Tebenkof Wilderness	66,812
Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness	653,179
Warren Island Wilderness	11,181
West Chichagof-Yakobi Wilderness	265,286
Nellie Juan College Fiord Wilderness Study Area*	1,412,230
Total	7,165,778

* Managed to protect wilderness character.

Bureau of Land Management

Designated Area	Size in Acres
Steese National Conservation Area	1,208,624
White Mountains National Recreation Area	998,702
Central Arctic Management Area – Wilderness Study Area*	478,700
Total	2,686,026

* Managed to protect wilderness character

BLM Wild and Scenic River Corridors	River Miles	Size in Acres
Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River	111.0	71,040
Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River	126.0	80,640
Delta Wild and Scenic River	62.0	39,680
Fortymile Wild and Scenic River	392.0	250,880

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Gulkana Wild and Scenic River	181.0	115,840
Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River	80.0	51,200
Totals	952	609,280

National Trails System	Miles
Iditarod National Historic Trail	418.0
Total	418.0

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Within the National Park System

River	Park Unit	River Miles
Alaganak	Katmai National Preserve	67.0
Alatna	Gates of the Arctic National Park	83.0
Aniakchak	Aniakchak Nat. Monument & Preserve	63.0
Charley	Yukon-Charley Rivers Nat. Preserve	208.0
Chilikadrotna	Lake Clark National Park & Preserve	11.0
John	Gates of the Arctic National Park	52.0
Kobuk	Gates of the Arctic Nat. Park & Preserve	110.0
Mulchatna	Lake Clark National Park & Preserve	24.0
Noatak	Gates of the Arctic Nat. Park and Noatak National Preserve	330.0
North Fork of the Koyukuk	Gates of the Arctic National Park	102.0
Salmon	Kobuk Valley National Park	70.0
Tinayguk	Gates of the Arctic National Park	44.0
Tlikakila	Lake Clark National Park & Preserve	51.0
	Total	1215.0

Within the National Wildlife Refuge System

River	Refuge Unit	River Miles
Andreafsky	Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge	262.0
Ivishak	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge	80.0
Nowitna	Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge	225.0
Selawik	Selawik National Wildlife Refuge	160.0
Sheenjek	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge	160.0
Wind	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge	140.0
	Total	1027.0